



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW

JANUARY, 1906

THE KARAITE LITERARY OPPONENTS OF SAADIAH GAON IN THE TENTH CENTURY.

THE literary campaign that Saadiah, first among the Rabbanites, started against the Karaites, and whose external history I have attempted to trace in this REVIEW¹, found the foe ready to join battle. There arose a complete array of Karaite scholars, who, either in special writings, or incidentally in the course of their works, repelled the attacks of Saadiah with energy. But they were not content to remain on the defensive. They speedily assumed an offensive attitude, and endeavoured, with varying degrees of success, to overthrow the arguments and proofs advanced by Saadiah in support of the Oral Law. A disagreeable element in the campaign is the personal abuse into which the controversy often degenerated: objective treatises are marred by regrettable recrimination. It must, however, be admitted that in this respect both parties sinned, although perhaps the Karaites sinned the more deeply.

The controversy initiated by Saadiah's activity did not cease with his death. It was not confined to the Gaon alone, but drew within its range the whole of Rabbinism. Henceforth polemics form a principal feature of Karaite

¹ *J. Q. R.*, X, 238-76. For Addenda and Corrigenda to that essay see end of the present series of articles.

literature: they inspire Karaism with fresh life, and stimulate the development of its literature in a very great measure. In truth, the polemical element existed in the very nature of Karaism. The latter was a product of opposition and revolt against the principles of Rabbinism, and hence its progress depended upon strife. Personal attacks were not unknown even in its very early days, for 'Anân is said to have prescribed the reading on every New Moon of Psalm lxxiv, because, in his opinion, there was an allusion, especially in verses 4 and 8, against the Rabbanites¹. Still, polemics play a very small part in the oldest writings of the Karaites, which, by the way, are still accessible only to a very small extent. It was not till the advent of Saadiah that their polemics assumed a tone of bitterness and occupied the most prominent place in their literary activity, and in the centre of the controversial medley was the figure of the Gaon. I now propose giving a bibliographical survey of this literature down to modern times. In the first place, it must be observed that the practice of the Karaites to repeat one another consciously, and often to copy one another verbally, is pursued to a still greater degree in their polemical treatises. The controversy carried on against the Rabbanites in general and against Saadiah in particular was for them a necessary of life, upon which they continuously drew as their main resource. Hence, even at a time when all spiritual life in their midst had been stifled, they still roused themselves, and brought forth their rusty weapons to attack the execrated Fayumite.

A brief survey of the earliest Karaite controversy directed against Saadiah is given by Sahl b. Maṣliāḥ in his polemical work תוכחת מנולה². We there read: וחספזים אשר כתב . . .

¹ Another statement of 'Anân, reported by Moses Taku, most probably belongs to the realm of legend. 'Anân is said to have wished that he could contain within himself all the learned Rabbis, so that by a single stroke of the sword he might be able to slay them all with himself. See *R. É. J.*, XLV, 201-2.

² Communicated by Steinschneider, *Catal. Lugd.*, p. 403, and Pinsker, לקושי קדמוניות, p. 37. The variants are unimportant.

(ר"ל סעדיה) לא הוציאם בחייו מתחת ידו על בני מקרא ואחד מהם נפל ביד בן משיח והשיב עליו בחייו וכן שלמון בן ירוחם השיב עליו בלשון הקדש על אשר כתב אשא משלי ואמר ואחרי מותו נפלו ספריו ביד בני מקרא בכל מקום ומקום וישיבו עליהן תשובות בדברים נכוחים כמסמרות נמועים בספרים הרבה כמו שעשה אבו אלטייב הנודע אלגבלי וכן עלי בן חסון וכן בן משיח ובן ירוחם הנודע בן רוחים ואבו עלי חסן אלבצרי "The writings that Saadiah composed against the Karaites did not leave his possession throughout his life. But one work fell into the hands of Ben Mashiah, and he replied to it during Saadiah's lifetime. Similarly Salmon b. Jeroham wrote against him in Hebrew and refuted his statement, beginning with the words ¹אשא משלי ואמר. But not until the death of Saadiah did his writings fall into the hands of the Karaites in various places, and give rise to a multitude of convincing arguments in a number of works. Among the authors of the latter were Abu-l-Tajjib, known as al-Jebeli, 'Ali b. Hasan, Ben Mashiah, Ben Jeroham, known as Ibn Ruheim, Abu 'Ali Hasan al-Basri, and others. I also have written a reply against his contentions," &c.

But this list is not complete. We miss, for example, of Saadiah's contemporaries, so important a writer as Qir-qisani; and even granting that Sahl mentions only those who composed special polemical treatises against the Gaon, we still miss Isaac b. 'Ali, &c. But what sense is there in the assertion that Saadiah throughout his life did not publish his polemical writings against the Karaites? He did not compose them for purely literary purposes, but wished by their means to counteract the increasing propaganda of the Karaites. Hence, had he suppressed his writings his intention would have been quite frustrated. The statements of Sahl are therefore to be treated with

¹ A chapter of Salmon's controversial work actually begins with the words (Pinsker, p. 18): והכמה אברה מן האומר: ארת סעדיה רבתי שרודה . . . ואחרי מותו נפלו ספריו ביד בני מקרא ואחד מהם נפל ביד בן משיח והשיב עליו בחייו וכן שלמון בן ירוחם השיב עליו בלשון הקדש על אשר כתב אשא משלי ואמר. Perhaps we should read here also: ואחרי מותו נפלו ספריו ביד בני מקרא ואחד מהם נפל ביד בן משיח והשיב עליו בחייו וכן שלמון בן ירוחם השיב עליו בלשון הקדש על אשר כתב אשא משלי ואמר. ואחרי מותו נפלו ספריו ביד בני מקרא ואחד מהם נפל ביד בן משיח והשיב עליו בחייו וכן שלמון בן ירוחם השיב עליו בלשון הקדש על אשר כתב אשא משלי ואמר.

caution. His order, too, I would rather not follow, but propose to give in chronological sequence all the Karaite literary opponents of Saadiah known to me, including also those who only indulged in occasional controversy against him. In any case, this sequence cannot be quite exact, inasmuch as there are no data respecting the lives of many Karaite authors, or the data extant are much confused and mutually contradictory, or, finally, they are fabricated intentionally. In order to make this survey clear, therefore, I shall enumerate these authors according to the centuries in which they lived.

TENTH CENTURY.

1. **Ben Zuṭa** (or **Ziṭa**). This otherwise little known Karaite, whose full name was Abu-l-Surri¹ b. Z., probably lived in Egypt, and disputed with Saadiah only by word of mouth, so that, strictly speaking, he does not belong to the *literary* opponents. If he did live in Egypt, he must have disputed with Saadiah whilst the latter was still very young. The substance of his polemical utterances, which are only known from references in Ibn Ezra, has already been fully dealt with in my *Miscellen über Saadja*, II², to which the reader may be referred.

2. **Ibn Saḡaweihī** (or **Saḡūje**), one of the oldest Karaite authors, about whose personality we likewise know nothing³. He composed an anti-rabbinical work bearing the title כְּתָב אֶלְפָּצִיחַ, "Book of Shameful Things" (i. e. of the Rabbanites), which consisted of the following ten sections :

¹ As Steinschneider rightly remarks (*Z. f. H. B.*, VI, 184), אֶסְרִי can only correspond to the Arabic السرى. But then it must be transcribed al-Surri (and not, as hitherto, al-Sari), see Sujuti, "De nominibus relativis ed. Veth.," p. 136: السرى بالضم والتشديد الى سُرْقِيَّة بِالرَّي. In *Jew. Encycl.*, V, 105 a, ben Z. has the forename "Eleazar"!

² *Monatsschrift*, XLI, 203-12. Cf. also *J. Q. R.*, X, 256, and *R. É. J.*, loc. cit., 193-4.

³ See Steinschneider, *Die arab. Liter. d. Juden*, pp. 45 and 281, no. 56 (also my *Zur jüdisch-arabischen Litteratur*, Berlin, 1904, p. 40).

(1) on the unity of God¹; (2) on a branch of the Sabbath laws, viz. the kindling of lights; (3) on another branch of these laws, viz. on presents (or, on irrigation on Sabbath); (4) on the determination of the New Moon; (5) on the rule לא בר' פסח (hence on the validity of *Dehijot*); (6) on leap-year; (7) on the prescriptions respecting forbidden fat; (8) on forbidden degrees of relationship; (9) on the prescriptions respecting menstruation; and (10) on pollution (בעל קרי). This work was preceded, by way of introduction, by a polemic against the Mishna, in which it was shown that the latter cannot be of divine origin. Ibn Sâqaweihi maintained therein, with regard to the subject-matter of the first four chapters, that the later Rabbis had erred in equal measure with the earlier ones; and with regard to the remaining six chapters, he was of opinion that here the later Rabbis had deviated from the earlier ones, and he sought to confirm this by proofs from the Talmud.

The work of Ibn Sâqaweihi thus comprised the entire scope of the controversy between Rabbanites and Karaites, dealing both with theological matters (anthropomorphism) as well as with matters of Halakha (Sabbath and festival laws, calendar science, and laws of diet, marriage, and cleanliness); and we should have had before us not a mere reply but an independent anti-rabbinical work (the oldest of its kind)². It is probable, however, that this work was the result of Saadiah's activity, so that it rightly belongs to the category of works dealt with in this study.

This section must be the source of Ibn Sâqaweihi's opinion, quoted by Moses ibn Ezra in his מקאלה איהודיקה, that רמי in Ps. lxxxiii. 2 does not mean "to be silent" but "to be similar" (quoted by Harkavy in his *Notes to the Russian translation of Graetz*, vol. VI, p. ci): . . . ולקד אפשה ביץ: אללואר ענא פי שרה אלהים אל רמי לך פאנה מאל בה מן מעני אלסכות אלי מעני אלהשביה פכרל לח מן סו אלקים ואל חתנו רמי לו (Jes. lxii. 7) אן לא שבה לה תצאלי חתי תנבני ירושלם קיר בן סאקיה הוזה אלכנאש פי כהאב פצאיה לנסה.

² Everything points to the positive inference that Ibn Sâqaweihi was a Karaite and not a sectarian *sui generis*, as Firkowitsch (see Gottlober, בקרה להולרות הקראים, p. 149) asserts. Moses ibn Ezra (see Harkavy, *ibid.*, p. c, and ירושים נח ישנים, VII, 33) places him in the same rank with Hivi al-Balkhi.

Express testimony to this effect is given by al-Hiti, who was intimately acquainted with Ibn Sâqaweihi's work, in the following words¹: וּבִן סָקוּיָה רַחֵם אֱתָ רִדְּ עָלַי אֶלְרַבָּאֲנִין וְעָלַי אֶלְפִּיזִימִי פִי אֶלְהֵלָאֵל וְאֶלְאֲבִיב וְאֶלְעֲנַזְרָה² וְאֶלְאֵלִיָּה וְאֶלְשַׁחַם וְאֶלְחַקְלִיד וְאֶבְטָל נִקְלָהֶם. This is the conclusion also to be derived from the fact that Saadiah, in his polemical work (about to be mentioned) against Ibn Sâqaweihi, already alludes to his principal work against the Karaites, the *Ketaab al-Tamim*³. It is, therefore, probable that Ibn Sâqaweihi also had before him many polemical writings of Saadiah⁴, which now provoked him to a counter-attack.

Of this polemical work of Saadiah, which bore the title *Ketaab al-Rid' 'Alai Abn Saqawi*, and of which only a few single quotations were known hitherto⁵, some extensive fragments have now been discovered. One of these, belonging to the early part⁶, contains the information about Ibn Sâqaweihi's work given above, as well as a part of the refutation of the first chapter, namely, the reproach that the Talmudists anthropomorphized the Deity⁷. A more extensive frag-

¹ *J. Q. R.*, IX, 435. Cf. *ibid.*, X, 253, note 3, and *Z. f. H. B.*, II, 79.

² On the Feast of Weeks (i. e. on the controversy respecting *מסורה* (חשבון) Ibn Sâqaweihi had no special section, but he doubtless dealt incidentally with this important theme in another section. Saadiah's views on this matter were preserved at the end of his *Ketaab al-Tamim*. See *J. Q. R.*, XVI, 102-5.

³ In the fragment soon to be mentioned, ed. Hirschfeld (*J. Q. R.*, XVI, 109). It is thus established anew that the controversial work against Ibn Sâqaweihi formed a separate work of Saadiah, and that therefore the correction is necessary in the words of Moses ibn Ezra: *הַנֶּאֱמָר וְלֹא כָרַב*: resp. (in Arab. original): *וְקָרַב בֵּין*: [בְּסֵפֶר הַמִּבְרֹךְ] [בְּחֻשׁוֹבוֹתָיו עַל בֶּן סָקוּיָה הַמַּאֲקִירֹת] וְרִבּוֹ סַעֲדִיָּה נֶאֱמָר וְלֹא פִי כֶּתָב אֶלְתַּמִּימ [וְ] פִי רִדְּ עָלַי בֶּן סָקוּיָה צִאֲרַב כֶּתָב אֶלְעֲנַזְרָה לְנֶפֶשׁ, see *ibid.*, p. 100, note 1.

⁴ Above all his controversial work against 'Anân, which appeared in the year 915. See *J. Q. R.*, X, 241.

⁵ Collected by me, *ibid.*, 252 seq.

⁶ Edited by Harkavy from the St. Petersburg Library, *ibid.*, XIII, 662 seq. (partly also *ibid.*, XVI, 112). Cf. also *R. É. J.*, XL, 88.

⁷ It can therefore be assumed with Harkavy (p. 667, note 2) that the quotation from Saadiah in Judah b. Barzilai's Commentary on *Ješira*, p. 20, is perhaps likewise taken from the polemical work against Ibn Sâqaweihi (so that *J. Q. R.*, X, 255 should be corrected).

ment (consisting of six leaves)¹ contains the refutation of the sixth chapter (on leap-year; the beginning is missing of what seems to have been a very complete treatment of the subject), the seventh (on the fat tail, אֵלִיָּה, the use of which was forbidden by the Karaites, as opposed to the Rabbanites, see *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 203, n. 3), and of the ninth chapter (on menstruation; the conclusion is missing). The refutation of the eighth chapter (on forbidden degrees of relationship) was thus not included in the work², probably because Saadiah composed a separate treatise on this subject³. Still another fragment⁴, in which the objections against the Mishna are refuted, is perhaps likewise an offshoot of the work against Ibn Sâqaweihi, as the latter (as we saw above) attacked the Mishna in his own polemical writing, and Saadiah expressly states that he will follow up the refutation of the first four chapters with a defence of the Mishna⁵. In this fragment Saadiah does not address his words to a particular person, as in the other two, but speaks of "those people"⁶.

The treatment that Saadiah accorded to Ibn Sâqaweihi in his work was not very generous. He usually calls him

¹ Edited by Hirschfeld from the Cambridge Geniza, *J. Q. R.*, XVI, 105-12. That this fragment belongs to the polemical work against Ibn Sâqaweihi is shown by the contents here presented, which correspond exactly to the order of the sections in the work of Ibn Sâqaweihi.

² This follows expressly from Saadiah's words (p. 110, l. 15) : וְאִם שְׂרָחָה אֵלֶּי אֶלְמִשְׁנָה מִן אֵלֶּי אֶלְמִשְׁנָה (אלמִשְׁנָה ר. אחי ארעה עליה פיהא אנה נאלפנה קרמאנה ונכשפנה מא קד תבין פינגי אן נשרה אלן [אל] באקיה דהי חמאם אלחראם אלן). On the division of the ten sections of Ibn Sâqaweihi into four and six, see above.

³ Steinschneider's doubts (*loc. cit.*, p. 49, no. 8) as to the existence of this work seem to me to be unfounded. Cf. my *Zur jüd.-arab. Litter.*, p. 42, and the Addenda at the end of the present series of articles.

⁴ Likewise edited by Harkavy, *loc. cit.*, 656-7.

⁵ See p. 663, l. 7 from bottom : קבל הוה אלי אבואב : וקדם (אי אבן סאקויה) קבל הוה אלי אבואב : פלדך ארי אן אקדם קבל זכר אלן אלמשנן עלי אלמשנה כוף יקאל אנהא ען משה רבינו . . . פלדך ארי אן אקדם קבל זכר אלן אבואב אלמִשְׁנָה זכר אלמשנה למציע מא העלך פי הוה אלמבואב בשי ממה ואמא אלן אבואב אלמאואל פארף עליהא פי מא שנע בה פיה קבל אחרתנאני לצחח אלמשנה

⁶ See p. 656, l. 7 from bottom : ראיח האולי אלקום ישעון בהא עלי . . . אלמשנה אלן.

"the ignoramus" (הוא אלנאחל), or "novice" (הוא אלגידר), or "that fellow" (הוא אלנכאן, הוא אלרגל), applying to him the verses Psalm xxxi. 19, Prov. xviii. 3, and Job xiii. 5. He says that he has rightly called his work כתאב אלפזאיה, because he has revealed in it only his own shame and confusion.

Besides being mentioned in the special polemical work, Ibn Sâqaweihi is referred to in another fragment, the author of which, according to Harkavy, must also have been Saadia. We there read¹: באן אלצאים [ויה] לא קאל בן סאק[ויה] ינוח לה שרב אלסכננבין אויא א . . . א . . . צ . . . מן אלרוא i. e. "did not Ibn Sâqaweihi maintain that one who is fasting may drink *sakanjabîn* (a sort of syrup prepared from sour wine), as it is to be regarded as medicine?"

3. Abû Jûsuf Ja'qûb [b. Isaac b. Shemaja?] al-Qirqisâni is rightly regarded as one of the foremost Karaite authorities, but the full extent of his literary importance has only become known in recent times². His chief work was a complete commentary about the passages of the Pentateuch not bearing on law (פי שרה מעאני), entitled כתאב אלריאן ואלחראיק (אלתוריה אלתי הי גיר אלפראין, "Book of Beds and Gardens," which had as introduction a complete compendium of law, entitled כתאב אלמנואר (אלמראקב, "Book of Lights and Watch-towers." In the former work the date of composition, Rabia' II, 326 of the Hegira = Adar 1249 contr. (= 938), is expressly given³; and the second work, too, which claims our chief interest, was composed, according to Ibn al-Hiti, a year earlier, i. e. 325 of the Hegira (= 937)⁴. Qirqisâni was accordingly

¹ *Woschod*, January, 1900, p. 83.

² Steinschneider details the literature on him, loc. cit., § 43 (supplemented in my *Zur jüd.-arab. Litter.*, p. 48). In these places everything is enumerated that has hitherto been edited of the works of Qirqisâni.

³ See Neubauer, *Med. Jew. Chron.*, II, 249, l. 7 from bottom: פאוא . . . אציף עלי וליך סני אלסכננר ודי סני אלשטורות וזמלחה אלי סנה שנו מן סני אלערב צאר אלה רמז . . . ושיחא הם תאליף הוא אלכתאב וליך פי שחר אדר ורו שחר רביע אלמזר. Cf. also Firkowitsch, בני רשף, p. 21.

⁴ *J. Q. R.*, IX, 432: אלשיך אלמאלם יעקב בן יצחק אלקרקסאני רח אה תאריך תצנישה :

a contemporary of Saadiah, but so far as is yet known, his name has not been found mentioned in the writings of the Gaon. Harkavy, indeed, conjectures¹ that the quotations from Saadiah found in Jehuda b. Barzilai's *Ješira* commentary, are taken from a work directed against Qirqisâni. But it is much more probable that Jehuda b. Barzilai had before him the polemical work against Ibn Sâqaweihî², especially as only one of the *Agadot*, but not the second³, defended by Saadiah, is cited by Qirqisâni. Moreover, it cannot yet be proved that Saadiah may have known the writings of his younger Karaite contemporary. On the other hand, Qirqisâni often quotes Saadiah and controverts him⁴; but unfortunately only a single long passage⁵ from the "Book of Beds" and a few chapters from the "Book of Lights" have hitherto been published. Still, I shall adduce here all the passages known to me.

The Pentateuch commentary exists in a longer and a shorter version, and there are fragments of both in St. Petersburg and in the British Museum. In the published passage from the longer version, which deals with chronology, there is an anonymous rejoinder to Saadiah. After stating that the Bible in dealing with large numbers of years often omits smaller ones, e.g. one or two years, the writer concludes: ופי הדיא כלה הדם אלעבור ופציה מן ידעי אנה קרים מנד אול כלק אלעאלם יגרי עלי סנ וואחר אלי הרה אלגאיה "From all this may be inferred the futility of the *'Ibbur* (i. e. of the permanent calendar) and the confusion of the one who has maintained that the calendar is very ancient, and that its rules have remained the same since the creation

אלאנאר סנה אלף ומאיתין המאניה וסבעין לשמרות פיתן ולך פי סנה 310 להגרה. Both these dates do not agree, and we must correct וסבעין into וארבעין and 310 into 320 (hence p. 437, note 1 must be rectified; in בני רשא, loc. cit., we rightly have 1248, Era of Contracts, but equally wrongly 315 of the Hegira).

¹ Introduction to Qirqisâni, p. 248.

² See above, p. 214.

³ Cf. *J. Q. R.*, X, 255.

⁴ Harkavy, loc. cit.

⁵ See Neubauer, loc. cit. Cf. also my *Miscellen über Saadja*, III, p. 9, note 1 (= *Monatsschrift*, XLIV, 408, note 2).

of the world." As is well known, this was the theory of Saadiah.

In the *Kitáb al-'Anwár*, of which I possess several excerpts in manuscript besides those printed, there are a few chapters exclusively devoted to the refutation of Saadiah, e. g. section xi, chap. 29, on forbidden degrees of relationship, and section xii, chaps. 15-16, on the use of the fat tail (מליה)¹. Again, in other passages Saadiah is controverted incidentally (often anonymously), or he is the chief object of controversy: e. g. section ii, chap. 13, on Saadiah's theory about the age of the permanent calendar²; *ibid.*, chaps. 14-15 (partly edited in *Z. f. H. B.*, III, 175), on the divinity and the necessity of the oral law; section xi, chap. 30 (edited in the *Kaufmann-Gedenkbuch*, p. 182; reprint, p. xiv), on the prohibition to marry a niece; section xii, chap. 7, on the wrenching off of a fowl's head (מליקה)³; *ibid.*, chap. 10, on the eating of dead fish (Saadiah's name is not mentioned here, cf. *Z. f. H. B.*, IV, 74); *ib.*, chaps. 20-1 (edited *loc. cit.*, p. 184; reprint, p. xvi) on the use of an embryo, &c. Similarly, according to Harkavy, Saadiah and his polemical work against 'Anân are meant in the following passage of the *Kitáb al-'Anwár*, the section and chapter of which cannot be ascertained for the present⁴: וקר זעם בעץ מן יתהו ללרבאנן ויר"ע עלי מן זעם אן אלצלאל מן אלתהלים אלך, i. e. "A Rabbanite has refuted the view that the prayers are to consist only of psalms," &c. As a matter of fact, this was a prescription of 'Anân, who endeavoured by this means to annul the hitherto prevalent order of prayer, because the latter went back upon tradition⁵.

¹ See the headings of these chapters in *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, pp. 201, 203.

² *J. Q. R.*, XIII, 661: כח צאר אלמן: וקר זעם בעץ מן יתהו ללרבאנן ויר"ע עלי מן זעם אן אלצלאל מן אלתהלים אלך; hence the same as in the passage just mentioned from the Pentateuch commentary.

³ See *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 203, note 1, and *R. É. J.*, XLV, 196-7.

⁴ See Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, V, 107. The continuation in his *Otcherki*, I, 52, note 3.

⁵ See, e. g., *Gan Eden*, fol. 71a; *Adderet Elijah*, ענין חפלה, chap. 5 (cf.

There is also a compendium of the *Kitāb al-'Anwār* (Brit. Mus. MS., Or. 2525, Catalogue II, no. 588, cf. *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 211), containing many controversial rejoinders to Saadiah, which had not yet been discovered in the main work: e. g. on the science of the calendar, where Saadiah's name is not expressly mentioned (fol. 44 a, seqq.; see *J. Q. R.*, VIII, 686); on incest (fol. 101 b, similar to section xi, chap. 29, of the main work; the passage may perhaps be taken from Saadiah's treatise on this subject, see above, p. 214); on the idea of *מים חיים* (fol. 137 b; cf. *Z. f. H. B.*, IV, 17 seq.), &c.

We thus see that Qirqisāni also touches on all the points of difference between Rabbanites and Karaites. It must be observed, moreover, that of all the older Karaite authors Qirqisāni is most deeply versed in the Talmudic literature, and that his polemics are calm in tone and objective in character.

[4. **Menaḥem b. Michael b. Joseph** is the author of a poem with commentary on the laws of slaughtering¹, in which a controversy is directed quite clearly against a Rabbanite opponent. The superscription of this poem reads: זאת האגרת ששלח רבנו מנחם הקראי לעקלם הגר אצל ר' . . . סעדיה הרבן על אדות הלכות שחיטה. Pinsker identifies the latter with Saadiah Gaon, makes Menaḥem his contemporary, and maintains that Menaḥem indulged in polemics against the

also Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, VIII, 1, 203). In another passage Qirqisāni reproaches the Rabbanites for not taking prayers [exclusively?] from the Psalms (sect. 1, chap. 3; ed. Harkavy, p. 286: וכן דרך אבות אסקטו אלצאה). A sectarian, Malik al-Ramli, prescribed that Ps. xxix should take the place of the Eighteen Benedictions, probably in agreement with the dictum of Hillel, the son of Samuel b. Nahmani, in *Berachot*, 28 b. See Harkavy, *Voschod*, Jan., 1900, p. 79. Similarly Petahia relates of the heretics in the land of Kedar: ואינם מחפלין אלא מזמורים וכשספר להם הר"ר פתחיה החפלה שלנו וברכת המזון היה טוב בעיניהם (cf. Harkavy, *Altjüd. Denkmäler*, p. 106). Cf. also the Responsa of Levi b. Ḥabib, no. 79: . . . שהמינים בישראל אין להם ברכות מסודרות ומחוקקות אלא . . . כל חפלה היא זמירה ופסוקים וכו'.

¹ Edited from a Leyden MS. (Cat. Steinschneider, no. 41⁶) by Pinsker, p. 55 seq.

Gaon¹. But this identification can hardly be considered correct, because the language of Menaḥem points clearly to a Byzantine Karaite, e.g. גבול for "definition" (p. 59, l. 7), יענה in the sense of "i. e." (= Arab. یعنی; *ibid.*, l. 28), expressions that the ancient Karaites in the East do not know. Consequently our poem cannot have been directed against Saadiah. Menaḥem belongs to a much later time, and is adduced here only for the purpose of showing that he does not belong to the category of the Karaite authors dealt with here by us. The lifetime of Menaḥem can, in any case, be determined with a certain probability. On the one hand, he is doubtless identical with the Karaite liturgical poet, Menaḥem b. Michael, of whose writings we possess (among others) a Zion Ode², so that he could not have composed any poetry before Jehuda Halevi. On the other hand, he is already cited by Aaron b. Joseph in the *Mibhar* (composed 1294) on Gen. xxvii. 3 (ed. fol. 50 b). We shall therefore not go wrong if we assume that he flourished somewhere in the second half of the twelfth century. For other proofs of a later date, see Geiger (אוצר נחמד, IV, 31) and Schorr (החלוין, VI, 76).]

It is thus established that only three Karaites disputed with Saadiah during his lifetime. The other two, who, according to Sahl, likewise refuted the Fayumite during his life, certainly developed their main literary activity after the demise of the Gaon. This is also true of

5. Salmon b. Jeroḥam (Arab. Sulejmān b. Ruḥeim), about the circumstances of whose life we possess hardly

¹ It is superfluous to enter into the other identifications of Pinsker (such as that of Menaḥem b. Michael with Menaḥem ha-Gisni, &c.), as their impossibility has long been proved.

² Begins זמן חקן עלי בנים יקרים מן ("Karaite Prayer Book," ed. Wilna, 1890, I, 134; cf. Landshut, *Amude ha-Aboda*, p. 76). Other liturgical poems of Menaḥem are: two Kinnot, נור וענב יקל בוכים, and משכנתי הצרתי and נור וענב יקל בוכים (*ibid.*, I, 127 and 135), and a Seliḥa, beginning אלהי אנוק נגדך שיחתי (*ibid.*, III, 316; cf. Pinsker, p. 139, no. 25; lacking in Luzzatto, נחלה שר"ל, in אוצר שוב, 1884, p. 4).

any authentic information¹. His Hebrew polemical work against Saadiah, written in wretched rhymes, is the only one that has been preserved from remote times, and this has been only partly edited. It was possibly composed while Saadiah was yet alive, about 940. I have already analysed its contents thoroughly in another connexion, and referred there especially to its snarling tone². Salmon wanted to render this work into Arabic too for the people, but we do not know whether this was carried out. In any case no Arabic version has been preserved.

Besides this polemical work Salmon also composed a series of Biblical commentaries, which were probably all issued in the sixth decade of the tenth century (i.e. after Saadiah's death), and which have been preserved partly in the original Arabic, partly in a Hebrew translation. Here, too, aggressive war is waged against Saadiah³, especially in the Commentary on Psalms (MS. in St. Petersburg). Salmon speaks here of Saadiah as of a completely unknown man (ושאדורת פי עזרי רנלָא יוערף באלפיומי), and refutes his view that the Psalms might be recited as prayers only in the Temple and only with musical accompaniment⁴. Then he also controverts another view of Saadiah, that entire psalms are prophecies of David, and that the royal minstrel had assigned many of them to the sons of Moses and to other Levites, to be sung⁵.

¹ See in particular Steinschneider, loc. cit., § 40 (also *ibid.*, p. 340).

² *J. Q. R.*, VIII, 684 seq. I have since published many more passages from it, thus *ibid.*, X, 271; *Z. f. H. B.*, III, 172; and *Kaufmann-Gedenkbuch*, p. 186.

³ Sahl's statement, quoted above, is thus confirmed, that Salmon conducted his campaign against Saadiah in his lifetime as well as after his death.

⁴ See the passage in question in Neubauer, *Studia Biblica*, III, 18. It is not difficult to see that Saadiah with this assertion aimed at an ordinance of 'Anân. See above, note 5, p. 218.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19. According to Saadiah, e.g., the heading לַמֶּלֶךְ in Ps. xc means as much as לַבְּנֵי מֶלֶךְ (he points to Judges i. 3, where יְהוֹדָה and שִׁמְעֹן likewise stand for בְּנֵי יְהוֹדָה and בְּנֵי שִׁמְעֹן), the heading לַשִּׁלְמֹה, in Ps. lxxii,

On Psalm cii. 14 there is a rather long excursus on the reckoning of the year of redemption, where likewise a vigorous attack is made on Saadiah. I have edited in full and thoroughly discussed this excursus¹, which Salmon again repeats almost verbally on Canticles ii. 11. On Psalm civ. 19 Salmon quotes his *אלפיומי עלי אלרד*, but it is doubtful whether he means here the Hebrew or the Arabic work². In connexion with cxl. 6 is related the often discussed fact that Saadiah denied that the Talmud speaks of physical struggles between the followers of Shammai and those of Hillel. This passage has also been thoroughly examined by me³.

In the commentaries on Echa and Kohelet, the only ones that I saw complete in the original Arabic, I found nothing polemical against Saadiah and especially nothing objectionable against the Rabbanites, who are elsewhere so violently attacked by Salmon⁴. Perhaps, therefore, Steinschneider is right in doubting their genuineness⁵, which has yet, in any case, to be established.

Finally, it may be mentioned that, according to Ibn al-Hiti, Salmon died in Aleppo during Saadiah's lifetime. The latter is said to have followed the funeral procession and to have pronounced a eulogy on the departed. All this naturally belongs to the realm of fiction (from mere chronological considerations), but still it is possible that Salmon indeed died in Aleppo⁶. We now know that Saadiah stayed in this town, even before his appointment as Gaon (about 921)⁷, but at that time Salmon was just a new-born babe.

is equal to "on Solomon," &c. Even David's authorship of any psalm is not to be disputed.

¹ "Miscellen über Saadja," III, Berlin, 1901 (reprint from *Monatsschrift*, XLIV, 400-16 and 508-29).

² See Pinsker, p. 133.

³ *Kaufmann-Gedenkbuch*, pp. 169 seq. (For a correction see my *ההלה לרור*, Warsaw, 1902, p. 16; cf. also *Monatsschrift*, XLVI, 376.)

⁴ See *J. Q. R.*, VIII, 689; XIII, 337.

⁵ *Hebr. Bibliog.*, XIII, 103 (cf. *R. É. J.*, XLI, 305).

⁶ See *Z. f. H. B.*, II, 79.

⁷ In a letter to his pupils, dated 922, on the dispute about the Calendar

6. **Hasan** (or **Husein**) **ben Mashiah**¹, according to the above-cited account of **Sahl**, wrote polemics against **Saadia** both in his lifetime and after his death. He is also said to have tried to hold a dispute with the Gaon verbally, but the latter roughly repulsed him. He succeeded, however, in obtaining one of **Saadia**'s anti-Karaite writings (which the author is said never to have allowed to leave his possession), and refuted it immediately (in a separate work?)². It is, of course, difficult to establish how much truth is contained in this report, but in any case **Ben Mashiah** ought to be a contemporary of **Saadia**, although a considerably younger one. According to **Ibn al-Hiti**, who often had good information at his disposal, **Ben Mashiah**, who lived in **Bagdad**, disputed with his fellow-townsmen, the Christian physician, **Abū 'Alī 'Isa b. Zar'a**. The latter wrote his polemical work against the Jews in the year 387 of the *Hegira* (= 997), and if we assume that this disputation took place before the appearance of this work, that is, about a few years before 997, and that **Ben Mashiah** was already an old man then, he can hardly have been engaged in literary activity before 940. Hence **al-Hiti** is quite right in coupling him with **Salmon b. Jeroḥam**, as they were of about the same age³.

with **Ben Meir**, **Saadia** says : רע כי בערני בחלב באו מקצה ההלמידים מבעל גר וכו' (*Saadyana*, ed. Schechter, p. 25, l. 12; cf. *J. Q. R.*, IX, 37, and *R. É. J.*, XLVIII, 149, note 3).

¹ For the literature about him refer to my article in *Jew. Encycl.*, s. v. (VI, 247; where, however, the determination of the period of his life must be modified in accordance with the present conclusions), and *Zur jüd.-arab. Litter.*, p. 47.

² Pinsker, p. 37 : . . . וכן לא היה (ר"ל סעדיה) מביא אליו כי אם את אשר הוא : . . . חפץ . . . וכן משיח הקציר נפשו מביניהם (?) והביא אותו חדר בחדר עד שצעק ואמר מה לי ולך מלך מעלי. והספרים אשר כתב לא הוציאים בחייו מחמת ירו על בני מקרא ואחד מהם נפל ביד בן משיח והשיב עליו בחייו וכו'. For continuation see above, p. 211.

³ See *J. Q. R.*, IX, 434 : . . . אלשיכון אבו אלחסן (sic) בן משיח וכלמון בן ירוחם : . . . כאנא פי זמאן אלפיומי וכאן בן משיח נאקצה מנאקצאת כליריה פי בגראר וכן ירוחם נאקצה פי חלב . . . ואבו [עלי] עיסי בן סרעה (ורעה l.) פי רסאלחה אלת[א]ם סבעין (?) ר"ל פיהא עלי אליהור חם אנה באבן משיח אלמכור ותנאדרא (ותנאפרא l.) חו וכו ואלרסאלה אלמכורה 1887 תאריכה עמלהא סנה 1887. The date 387 is confirmed by *Ibn abi Oseibia* (ed. Müller, I, 236, l. 10 from bottom). **Ibn Zar'a** was born in August, 943,

Of Ben Mashiah's polemics against Saadiah, we are principally acquainted with a passage directed against the Gaon's defence of the antiquity of the present calendar-system, in which Ben Mashiah refers to "Sadducean writings (כתבי צדוקים, כתב אלצדוקיה), which are known among the people." This passage has been preserved in Arabic, in a commentary on Exodus, of which Sahl or perhaps even Ben Mashiah himself is the author, and in Hebrew in a fragment that originates from Hadassi¹. Besides this, a MS. has been recently published, in which Ben Mashiah reproduces a complete Hebrew treatise on the calendar of an otherwise unknown Rabbanite, Joshua b. 'Alân², and which writing perhaps originally formed the constituent part of a polemical work by Ben Mashiah.

7. 'Abû 'Anân Isaac b. 'Ali b. Isaac was, according to Ibn al-Hiti, an important Karaite scholar, who in a special work, entitled *כתב אלסראן* (?), tilted his controversial pen against Saadiah among others. I have already compiled in another place the little that is known about him, and there shown that he probably flourished about the middle of the tenth century³.

8. Abu-l-Ṭajjib al-Jebeli (Hebr. Samuel b. Asher b. Manṣûr)⁴ is also mentioned by Sahl among the Karaites who wrote polemical works against Saadiah after his death. According to Ibn al-Hiti, he is said to have been a contemporary of Abu-l-Faraj Harûn; but as the latter flourished about 1026, al-Jebeli could not have been cited by Sahl. According to a further account of Ibn al-Hiti, al-Jebeli disputed with the head of a school, Menahem, after he became acquainted with a work of a son of Menahem

and died at the beginning of May, 1008; see *Fihrist*, I, 264; II, 121. Cf. also Steinschneider, *Polem. u. apolog. Literatur*, pp. 146-7.

¹ Both versions are published and discussed by me in *R. É. J.*, XLV, 176-7, where all particulars may be found.

² Edited in *הפסיוה*, 1899, nos. 141-2, and again in *הגון*, IV, 75 (cf. *Zur jüd.-arab. Litter.*, 1. c.).

³ See *ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

⁴ See on him my short article in *Jew. Encycl.*, VII, 16 a.

addressed to a certain Abû Tâbit¹. If this Menaḥem, as I conjecture, is identical with another of the same name, who addressed inquiries in Arabic to Saadiah (see הגרן I, 91)², then al-Jebeli could likewise have composed his polemical work about the middle of the tenth century.

9. 'Ali b. Ḥasan (or Ḥusein) likewise figures in Sahl's list among Saadiah's disputants, but there are no particulars known about him. Pinsker (p. קיא) identifies him with the grandfather of Levi b. Jefet, who, in his *Muqaddima* (ibid., p. 64, where 'Ali b. אלהסן), mentions a commentary on the Pentateuch by him. Accordingly, 'Ali, as he was the father of Jefet, would have flourished about 960-70. But there is a lack of sufficient proof for this, and, besides, the authenticity of the *Muqaddima* is not quite free from doubt³.

10. David b. Abraham al-Fāsi is the author of a comprehensive and voluminous Hebrew dictionary in Arabic, bearing the title כתאב נאמע אלאלפאט or אנרון. Pinsker and Neubauer have published detailed specimens from it, and placed the author in the second half of the tenth century, soon after Saadiah. On the other hand, there was no lack of attempts, especially on the part of Schorr, to place him in the twelfth century, after Ibn Ezra. But one will have to decide for the first date⁴. In this lexicon Saadiah is

¹ J. Q. R., IX, 435 : ואלשיך שמואל בן אשר בן מנצור אלמערק באבו אלשייב אלגלי : כאן פי זמאן אלשיך אבר (אבי ל.) אלפרז הארון והנאצרא (= והנאצרא) פי אלמבי ואלמנה אלשרעיה וכאן עלי ראי אלמולי אבו עלי רה אה ולה מקאלה פי אפסאר אלמחזור והסאב אלמולד ורף עלי מנחם ראש מחיבא עור וקופה עלי רקעה בן מנחם אלי אבי האברה איידה אה. Al-Jebeli's work against the Mahzor-cycle and the calculation of the Molad must be identical with the polemical treatise against Saadiah, as these subjects form the principle theme of polemics. When Ibn al-Hiti says further, that al-Jebeli was of the opinion of Abu 'Ali, i. e. Jefet, one need not yet conclude from this that he followed him, but that their opinions on this point were in agreement.

² Cf. Steinschneider, *Arab. Liter. d. Juden*, § 30 (and also ibid., p. 339).

³ Cf. also Steinschneider, *J. Q. R.*, X, 539, and my *Zür jüd.-arab. Litter.*, p. 49, l. ult.

⁴ See the literature dealing with the matter in Steinschneider, pp. 86 and 341, and in Bacher, *Jew. Encycl.*, s. v. (IV, 459, 460).

quoted twice s.v. **דש** (Pinsker, p. 108), and his interpretation of the verses Gen. i. 11, 12, is refuted. In these verses the yielding of fruit-bearing trees only is mentioned, not of ordinary trees (see Nahmanides on the passage). Now Saadiah must have explained ver. 11 in such a way, that the latter are to be understood by **עץ פרי**, i.e. trees that are a fruit of the earth, as opposed to fruit-bearing trees, which are **עשה פרי**. Ver. 12 is shortened, and should also read here **עץ [פרי] עשה פרי**. This explanation of Saadiah, which is combated by David b. Abraham, is, however, in contradiction to the Gaon's translation of the particular two verses.

11. **Abu Sa'id (?) David b. Boaz**, the Prince (**הנשיא, אלריים**), according to a genealogical list of Solomon the Prince (Pinsker, p. 53), was in the fifth generation of descent from 'Anân. Hence David would have flourished about 910 (approximately $5 \times 30 = 150$ years after 'Anân), and have been a contemporary of Saadiah. On the other hand, according to Ibn al-Hiti, David composed his commentary on Kohelet in the year 383 of the Hegira (=993), and was mentioned even after Levi b. Jefet by the Solomon referred to¹, so that David would belong to the last quarter of the tenth century. This date seems to me also to be the more correct, principally because David, so far as is yet known, is first quoted by Joseph al-Baṣīr in the **ספר המועדים**². Hadassi also mentions him between Jefet and his son³, though this may be accidental.

Of David's works Ibn al-Hiti mentions, besides the commentary on Kohelet, still another on the Pentateuch and a book on the principles of religion (**כתאב אלאצול**)⁴.

¹ J. Q. R., IX, 432: **ואלסיד דוד בן בועז רח אה תצניפה קהלת פי סנה זא"ר להנהיג** **לאמה (אי שלמה הנשיא) זכר אוולא** : and *ibid.* : **ולא תפסיר אלתורה וכתאב אלאצול עין הם בנימין הם דניאל הם אלקרקסאני הם אבו אלסרי הם אבו עלי אלבצרי וולדה הם דוד בן בועז אלנשיא הם אלמצלם אבו עלי (?) רחמה אה עליהם אנמעין**.

² See the passage in Pinsker, p. 199 (cf. also *ibid.*, p. קיא).

³ *Eshkol*, 241, פ : **פשונום תמצא בספר אוצר הנהמד ובספר חורר כהנים [של] : וכן (1) יפת נ"ע יחד וכו' המלמדים סהל יופה דוד הנשיא וכן (1) יפת נ"ע יחד וכו'**.

⁴ The composition of such a work also points rather to a post-Saadyanic Karaite than to a contemporary.

Of the Pentateuch commentary there have been preserved only considerable parts in MS., namely, on Leviticus and on the second half of Deuteronomy in St. Petersburg; on Exod. xxv. 1-xxxiii. 13 in the British Museum (Catalogue Margoliouth, Vol. I, No. 384), and, in addition, on the whole of Exodus in a modern copy in the Karaite synagogue in Jerusalem¹. According to Harkavy (*Z. A. T. W.*, I, 157), David, in the St. Petersburg MS., frequently controverted Saadiah, not expressly naming him, however, but only designating him as **הוא אלרגל**. In the London MS. there are two such passages (fol. 19 a on xxv. 32 and fol. 31 b on xxvii. 4), and in both the discussion is about the construction of appurtenances of the tabernacle².

Besides this MS. of the British Museum, Margoliouth has been trying to show that some other MSS. of the same collection also have David as their author, but the demonstration is not everywhere quite convincing³. We have to consider only two of them here. The one (MS. Or. 2494¹; Cat. No. 318¹) contains a commentary on the first pericope of Leviticus (the beginning and end are missing), and in two passages (ff. 1b, 4b) there is a hit at the **הוא אלרגל**. The second is much more important (Or. 2495; Cat. No. 306). This MS., of which I have a copy of a few excerpts, contains a very detailed commentary on Lev. xi. 1-xv. 25. Of authors mentioned here besides the Talmudists (designated **אלאולן** and **אלרבאנין**) and 'Anân, only Saadiah is very often cited⁴, sometimes as **אלפימי**, sometimes also as **הוא אלרגל**, his name being accompanied by the formula **רחא אללה**. The points on which Saadiah's views are combated naturally concern the laws of purity, but they are mostly questions of subordinate

¹ See Steinschneider, § 39 (also *ibid.*, p. 340).

² See the beginning of both passages in Margoliouth's Catalogue, where Saadiah is referred to in the one as **זוך אלרגל**, and in the other as **הוא אלרגל**. In this MS. David is also called **אבו סעיד דוד בן בועז קרא** (the entire MS. is otherwise, without exception, written with Arabic letters).

³ Cf. *R. É. J.*, XLI, 305, 306.

⁴ See the list of passages in Margoliouth's Catalogue.

importance. Once (fol. 181 a, on xv. 25; see further, p. 233) the prescriptions about menstruous women are also discussed. The controversy is conducted calmly and pertinently. Different expressions are adduced, e.g.: וְהָיָה אִצָּא פֶּאסֶד (ibid.); אִד טָאָהֶר אֶלְנִי לָם יִקְחָצִי דִלְךָ (fol. 47 a)¹; פֶּקֶד רִדְנָא עֲלֶיהָ מָא יִסְקֵט קוּלָּהּ (fol. 179 b); בְּטַל מָא אֹוֶרְדָּה (fol. 78 a); זְמַלָּה מָא קָאֵלָה . . . לָא יִצְחָחָה אֶלְנִטֶּר וְלָא אֶלְכְּתָאב (fol. 182 a), &c. Thus, unlike the Karaite custom elsewhere observed, only views but not personalities are combated. In one passage the author refutes an opinion of Saadiah, which is really that of the Talmud (viz., the well-known explanation of דָּם בֵּין דָּם לָרֵם in Deut. xvii. 8, that what is intended here is a decision respecting the pure and impure blood of a menstruous woman, see Sifre, ad loc., and parallel passages), and he refers to his own commentary on this verse (fol. 165 a): . . . אַעֲלָם אָן זָמִיעַ מָא קָאֵלָה (אִי אֶלְפִיוִּמִּי) לָא יִצָּח מִנָּה שִׁי וְדִלְךָ בָּאן קוּלָּהּ בֵּין דָּם לָרֵם הוּא פִי דָם נִדָּה דְעוּי וְלִכְצֻמָּה אָן יִקוּל הוּא פִי דָם נִפְשוּת אֶלְדִּי תִקַּע בֵּין שׁוּגֵג אֶלִּי מִיּוֹד פִּיחְתָּאנִי אֶלִּי פִקָּה כְּהֵן גְּדוּל אִד הוּא מַעֲלָק בָּהּ וְאִצָּא קוּלָּהּ דְּבַר לְמִשְׁפַּט יִרְלָא אָן דִּלְךָ כֹּוֶרֶג מִנָּה וְאִנְמָא אֶלְקֻצָּאן אֶלְדִּי יִקְחָל עֵן אִמֶּר אֶלְחָאכְם וְלִים דָּם נִדָּה וּזְכָה מִן דְּבָרֵי הַמִּשְׁפָּט וְלָא דְּבָרֵי רִיב בֵּל הוּא מִן אֶלְמֻצוֹת אֶלְדִּי תַעֲרַפְהָא אֶלְנִסָּא כְּמָא יַעֲרָפוּ אֶלְרִנְאֵל שְׁכֵבֶת זֶרַע וְלִים פִּיהָ טָאָהֶר וְקִד בְּיָנִי פִי תַפְסוֹר הָיָא אֶלְפִסוֹק מָא יִרְלָא שְׁכֵבֶת זֶרַע וְלִים פִּיהָ טָאָהֶר וְקִד בְּיָנִי פִי תַפְסוֹר הָיָא אֶלְפִסוֹק מָא יִרְלָא . . . ² The Karaite author doubtless used as his source in every case Saadiah's commentary on the Pentateuch, and we should thus possess here important fragments of this vanished work.

12. Jefet b. 'Ali ha-Lewi (Arab. Abū 'Ali Hasan b. 'Ali al-Baṣri) must have flourished in the last quarter of the tenth century³. He is the most prolific Karaite exegete of

¹ See the whole passage in *R. E. J.*, XLV, 56.

² Perhaps the Samaritan Munajja b. Šedāqa also disputes with Saadiah on this point; see Wreschner, *Samarit. Traditionen*, p. 33. Cf. also *Keter Tora*, ad loc. (fol. 20 b).

³ His commentary on Daniel, which is apparently one of his latest commentaries (perhaps even the latest), appeared about the year 1000. See D. S. Margoliouth's preface to his edition of this commentary (Oxford, 1889), p. v.

the Bible, for he translated the entire twenty-four books of Scripture into Arabic and commented upon them very fully, partly at least in two recensions (Pentateuch, Psalms ?; see *R. É. J.*, XLI, 306). The commentaries of Jefet, especially that on the Pentateuch, afford very much valuable material for the history of the older Karaite literature and theology; but of the many MSS. extant in St. Petersburg, London, Oxford, Paris, Berlin, &c., unfortunately only a comparatively small portion has been edited ¹.

According to Sahl, Abû 'Ali Ḥasan al-Baṣri, i. e. Jefet, likewise combated Saadiah in a special work, which is further corroborated by Jefet's own statements. The composition of such a work is promised in the passage on Gen. i. 14. After Jefet advances controversial arguments about the calendar against Saadiah in very thorough fashion ², he adds that he has entered into this dispute only incidentally, because his main purpose is to present here an exposition of Holy Writ. But should God vouchsafe him the time, then he will refute the views of Saadiah in a special treatise (. . . ויגב אן יעלם אלקאר פי הוא אלבאב אני לם אקצר אלתערץ בראם אלמתיבה או בגירה מן מכאלפי אלקראיין ואנמא למא כאן חרד אלכלאם פי באב אלמטאלבה ואסתקצא עליהם נהרה דכרת עיון מטאלבאתה ואלרד עליה באכתצאר לאנה כתאב תפסיר ולא יחתמל אלתאסאע ואן פסח אללה פי אלעמר פרדת להוא אלבאב כתאב יחתוי עלי נמיע מא אתבתה פי כתבה מן כתב אלתפאסיר וגירהא ואטהר מא עליה פי כל באב ובאב (אן שא אללה חע אלך). On the other hand, in the passage on Exod. xxxv. 3 (published by Pinsker, p. 20), he quotes this controversial treatise as already in existence: . . . ודלך כמא רדרת בה עלי מרעייה פי אלכתאב אלדי אלפת לה. Jefet's polemical work, like many others, is now lost,

¹ A review of the known and available MSS. and of the parts edited so far is given by Steinschneider in *Die arab. Liter. d. Juden*, § 44 (also *ibid.*, p. 341, and *Zur jüd.-arab. Litter.*, p. 49; add the MS. no. 234 of the library of the Alliance isr. univ. in Paris, containing the comm. on Lev. xxvi. 38-xxvii, cf. *R. É. J.*, XLIX, 286, and the translation of Gen. viii. 1-22, and ix. 18-28, printed in Kahle, *Die arab. Bibelübersetzungen*, pp. 29-31).

² See *J. Q. R.*, X, 246.

and we do not know whether he composed it in Arabic, like all his other works, or in Hebrew, like a work directed against Jacob b. Samuel, to be mentioned below. But although Jefet maintains that he will not expand his commentary by a controversy with Saadiah or with other opponents of the Karaites, he does nevertheless indulge in polemics, especially in the Pentateuch commentary, very often and very thoroughly against the ראם אלמתיבֶּה, and quotes rather long passages both from anti-Karaite works as well as from the Bible commentaries of Saadiah¹. I now proceed to give a survey of the passages in question from Jefet's commentaries, so far as I have them before me either in printed form or in manuscript excerpts². I arrange them according to subject-matter, and must observe that here especially Jefet very often repeats himself verbally.

1. On the justification of the Oral Law in general, its divinity and necessity: Exod. xxi. 33 (here Jefet defends very thoroughly especially the method of analogy, היקש, קיאם, applied by the Karaites) and Dan. xii. 4 (ed. D. S. Margoliouth, p. 141). Contrary to his usual custom, Jefet uses, in the last passage, very harsh words, and says that Saadiah and his party, in maintaining that one must without personal investigation follow the representatives of the prophets, that is, the teachers of the Mishna and Talmud, have thereby led Israel into ruin, and so forth³. Jefet treats

¹ See *ibid.*, 241 seq., the passages from Saadiah's anti-Karaite writings preserved by Jefet. Saadiah's commentary on the Pentateuch, e. g., is expressly mentioned by Jefet on Gen i. 14: ... כמא קלה פי חפסיר הויה אלקצה; Exod. xxi. 33: ... חם; פי בראשית ודו קולך וקולה ולחבריל בין היום ובין הלילה ישיר אלך; מע ולך פאנא וגרמא לה פי חפסיר ואלה שמות פי ושמתו לך מקום אשר ינום יקול אלך; ... וולך אנה חכי ענהם אלפיומי פי פצל מכת צפרעים מא הויה נחכיה חרף: xxiii. 15: ואמא אלפיומי פקר אברע עלי כתאב אלה תע. ... כמק פי: 4: xxiv. בחרף ודו קולה אלך. ... פודה חכאיה מא דזה אליה: Lev. xviii. 6: חפסיר הויה אלמוצע חרף בחרף אלך אלפיומי פי חפסיר הויה אלפסוק וועם.

² I use copies from the most varied libraries.

³ פודה אלאקאיל ונפראוהא תרל עלי בשלאן קול אצחאב אלתקליר מחל קול אלפיומי ... וגירה אלדין אהלכו ישראל במא דלנו וקאלו לים יגוון אן הערף פראיץ אלה תע מן אלבחא ... ויגב אלתקליר לכלפא אלאנביא דהם אצחאב אלמשנה ואלהלמוד ... פאטגני אלנאם בבחבה אלמוצרפה אלך. Cf. also my conclusions in *R. E. J.*, XLI, 183 seq.

this subject also in some other passages of his commentaries, and disputes here with the Rabbanites in general. He clearly hints at Saadiah in the passage on Deut. xxxiii. 14, and there employs similar expressions to those used in the Daniel passage: **וימנן אן יבון מעתמד ללקול אלבאמל ליצל אלנאם** **ען אלחץ במא ילבם עליהם באקאויל מזכרפה נשאהא פי כתבה אלך**.

2. Questions of calendar-science: hence the rise and age of the present calendar, validity of the *Dehijot*, fixing of leap-years, &c.—questions that are known to have been in the very centre of the controversy between Rabbanites and Karaites. The chief passage is Gen. i. 14 (partly edited *J. Q. R.*, X, 246 seq.; cf. also above), where Saadiah's theory about the great age of the calendar-system is quoted from his *Kitāb al-tamjiz* and the Pentateuch commentary and very thoroughly refuted. There further belong to this section: Gen. viii. 3 (the chronology of the Flood is here considered, and various questions of calendar-lore are discussed; cf. *J. Q. R.*, X, 241); xlix. 14 (partly the same as on i. 14; cf. *ibid.*, 248, n. 2; Saadiah's proof from 1 Chron. xii. 33 is chiefly refuted here)¹; Exod. xii. 2 (see *ibid.*, 248, n. 3, and 253); xxiii. 15 (on the determination of the **אביב**, hence on the question of the intercalary month; in two versions); xxxiv. 18 (on the same subject; Jefet refers here to the second version of his commentary on xii. 2 **וקר רדינא עליה פי החדש הזה לכם פי אלנסכנה אלמזרה במא פיה** **כפמאיה**); Lev. xxiii. 3 (partly the same as on Gen. i. 14); xxiii. 5 (likewise in two versions; see *J. Q. R.*, X, 249 and 253); Deut. xvi. 1 (see *ibid.*, 250 and 253); xxxiii. 18 (likewise on the proof from 1 Chron. xii. 33); and 1 Sam. xx. 27 (see *ibid.*, 251). In many of these passages Jefet affords interesting material also about the history of the calendar among various sectarians and kindred matter (see e. g., *ibid.*, 265, n. 2).

¹ The same thing is again repeated by Sahl (in Pinsker, p. 37; cf. further *infra*, p. 242), Levi b. Jefet in his **ספר המצות** (see **כרם חמד**, VIII. 56), Jeshua b. Jehuda (**בראשית רבא**, MS. Leyden, 41², f. 89 b), and Aaron b. Elias (**גן עדן**, f. 4 c; the latter two without mentioning Saadiah).

3. The kindling of fire on the Sabbath, a question likewise often discussed in Karaite polemics. The Karaites, as is well known, not only prohibit the kindling of fire on the Sabbath, but even the continued burning of anything—a severity derived, as I have recently shown (*R. É. J.*, XLIV, 174 seq.), from the expanded meaning of the word מלאכה. Jefet often deals with this subject, viz. *Exod.* iii. 2; xx. 10 (Saadiah is mentioned here only cursorily at the end: . . . ונחן נתכלם פי תחרים סראז אלסבת כלאם אוסע מן הוּא; פי לא תבערו אש אלוי הו מוּזע אלחאנה וננקן נמיע מא דברה ראם; (אלמתיבה בעון אללה); xxxv. 3 (this is the detailed passage to which Jefet previously refers; Saadiah's entire proofs are here adduced and thoroughly refuted; cf. Pinsker, pp. 18, 90); *Lev.* xxiii. 3 (completely the same as on *Exod.* xxxv. 3); *Deut.* v. 13 (here Saadiah is adduced only anonymously: . . . פאן קאל קאיל אן וַיִּבְעֶר הוּ מנעמף עלי אלנאר תנרהא פי אלעבראני; מוּנה קיל לה אלף; this conception of the word in *Judges* xv. 5 is that of Saadiah); xxv. 4 (see *J. Q. R.*, X, 251).

4. On the time of sacrificing the Paschal offering: *Exod.* xii. 6. This question is notably linked together with the Karaite interpretation of the concept בין הערבים, which deviates essentially from the Rabbinical: see my remarks in *R. É. J.*, XLV, 176 seq.

5. The fixing of the time of Pentecost, i.e. the interpretation of ממחרת השבת, one of the differences that the Karaites have taken from the Boethusians (see *Monatsschrift*, XLI, 206, and *J. Q. R.*, XVI, 407): *Lev.* xxiii. 15 (edited by Hirschfeld, *Arabic Chrestomathy*, p. 109 seq., Jefet's most detailed passage on this subject; cf. also *J. Q. R.*, X, 250, n. 2); *Num.* xxxiii. 3 (here Jefet refers to the former passage: . . . וקד כנא אוסענא אלכלאם פי אלרד עלי ראם אלמתיבה פי מא אחתאז; (ללרבתיין פי אחבאח מואהבהם פי וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת אלף; *Deut.* xvi. 9 (very detailed; Saadiah is not expressly mentioned here, but is designated as אלרגל, once also as אלנאם ללרבאנן; (בען אלנאם ללרבאנן; *Joshua* v. 11 (here also Saadiah is cited only anonymously: פקד גלט מן פן אן ממחרת הפסח הו

לך (יום סתה עשר אלך); Ezek. xlvi. 12 (here also שבת signifies not festival, but Sabbath; cf. further below).

6. Laws of Purity. Of the differences existing between Rabbanites and Karaites on this point, the prescriptions about menstruous women come in specially for consideration. There are two points in particular, one concerning the interpretation of דמי טהרה in Lev. xii. 5, where the Karaites follow the severe view of the Sadducees (see Geiger, *Jüd. Zeitschrift*, II, 27; cf. also below), and the other dealing with the determination of the colours in the impure blood of a menstruous woman, which, according to the Talmud, is five-fold (see, e.g., Aaron b. Elia, גן עדן, fol. 110 a seqq.; cf. also *Z. f. H. B.* IV, 20). Jefet combats Saadiah on the first point, on Lev. xii. 7 (Saadiah says here, among other things, one must, according to Prov. xxii. 28, follow the wise: וועם אן אלחכמים אונבו דלך וקר וגב קבול דלך מנהם לקול: אלקתאב אל חסג גבול עולם אשר עשו אבותיך אלך, and this leads Jefet to a short digression on the Oral Law); and on the second point, on Lev. xv. 19.

7. Marriage laws, notably one of the most difficult and complicated chapters in the legal lore of the Karaites, especially in regard to the forbidden degrees of relationship. Nevertheless, in his controversy with Saadiah, Jefet mostly touches only subordinate points, which are besides more of an exegetical nature. Thus, on Lev. xviii. 6, concerning the expression שאר בשר (cf. *Kaufmann-Gedenkbuch*, p. 175; Jefet also considers here the interpretation of Ezra x. 3, on which further below); on xviii. 15, on the expression בלתי, which, according to Saadiah, includes also the son's betrothed, so that the words אשת בנך had to be added here. Much more detailed is the controversy about Levirate marriage, on xviii. 18. Here Jefet follows the opinion of 'Anân, according to which אחים, in Deut. xxv. 5, means not "brethren" but "kindred" (cf. *R. É. J.*, XLV, 61 seq.), and among other things very thoroughly refutes Saadiah's proof, that just as the prohibition of Lev. xviii. 16 is limited by the command of Deut. xxv. 5, so also a

biblical prohibition can be liable to limitation by another command (or, in other words, עשה דוחה ל"ת, cf. *R. É. J.*, XXXIV, 169), as e.g. the prohibition of Exod. xx. 10 by the command of Num. xxviii. 9¹.

8. Civil law: Exod. xxi. 24 (published and discussed in *Monatsschrift*, XLI, 205), where Jefet upholds the literal interpretation of the *jus talionis*, and at the same time disputes with Saadiah, without mentioning his name.

9. Exegetical and miscellaneous matters: Gen. i. 2 (communicated by Munk, *Notice sur Abou 'l-Walid*, p. 40, n. 1: וקר גלט מן ועל אשתקאק חתו מן חתום אלך; Saadiah is meant, see Ibn Ezra, ad loc.); xv. 9 (a refutation of Saadiah's allegorical interpretation of the kinds of beasts mentioned here, where the Gaon partly follows the Midrash²; especially interesting are Jefet's concluding words: פלו משא (אי ראם אלמחיבה) עלי טאהרה כעאדתה פי כחיר מן אלמואצע אלוי ירד עלי מן אברג אלנצין מן טאהרה אלי אלתאויל בניר מאנע לכאן קר סלם מן (היה אלולקה אלכבירה); xix. 11 (Saadiah is said to have maintained that יאכלו in xviii. 8 referred to Ishmael and the servants of Abraham! In the translation there is no trace of this); Exod. iii. 2 (communicated by Pinsker, p. 72; on the explanation of לבת אש³; xi. 4 (? see Munk, l. c., p. 41); xxiv. 4 (according to Saadiah what is related here happened on Sivan 9, soon after the Revelation); xxx. 12 (on כסף כפורים⁴; Saadiah is quoted here anonymously: פאלוי . . .

¹ The words of Jefet in question are: וליס סביל אלסחחני אן ירד בלפש: . . . מוחמל ואנמא ירד בלפש מחכם מאל וביום השבת שני כבשים בני שנה אלוי אורדה אלפוימי פאנה מחכם פהוא אלפרק בין כי ישבו אחים ובין וביום השבת שני כבשים אלך. These words of Jefet must be the basis of Aaron b. Elias' conclusions, which are interesting though tinged with a philosophical tendency (*Gan Eden*, f. 159). Cf. also Pinsker, p. 66.

² This interpretation of Saadiah is also criticized by Dunash b. Labrat (no. 7), cf. Ibn Ezra's שער יתר, no. 7, and Lippmann's notes on it, as well as Geiger's *Wiss. Zeitschr.*, V, 311, and כרם חסד, V, 101. On the Agadic interpretation of the Vision of Beasts especially see Steinschneider, *Polem. u. apolog. Liter.*, p. 266 seq., and on Saadiah's principles in his allegories, see the passages quoted *Monatsschrift*, XLI, 208, n. 3.

³ For the original of Saadiah's commentary on this verse, see *Z.A.T.W.*, I, 152.

⁴ The particular passage from Saadiah's commentary on this verse in

(ט"ז אן כסף כפורים כאן יעמא פי כל סנה אלף); Isa. lii. 13 (published by Neubauer, *The 53rd Chapter of Isaiah*, &c.; on the Servant of God); Jer. xxxvi. 1 (see my *בר מנחם בר* לחבני הקדש, p. 31, n. 9; the Megillah mentioned here cannot possibly mean Echa, as Saadiah following the Talmud maintains); Ezek. xlvi. 12 (according to Saadiah the form תרומיה would point to a duplication); and Dan. xii. 13 (ed. D. S. Margoliouth, p. 151; on the calculation of the year of Redemption, see my *Miscellen über Saadja*, III, 11 = *Monatsschrift*, XLIV, 410).

The tone is mostly calm and agreeable; but the demonstration is not always fortunate. But it must be remembered that the arguments of Saadiah too are very often superficial. The commentaries of Jefet, however, are also in this respect of great importance.

Nothing has yet been discovered of Jefet's polemical work against Saadiah, as has already been observed. On the other hand, a work of this kind in Hebrew, directed against a pupil of the Gaon, Jacob b. Samuel, has been preserved¹; and I have recently expressed the conjecture, which still needs verification, that this pupil is identical with the Jacob ibn Ephraim mentioned by Qirqisāni as his interlocutor (so that his full name must have been Jacob ben Samuel ibn Ephraim)². But as the Karaites, and especially Jefet, repeat themselves very often, and inasmuch as particularly in their anti-rabbinical campaign they almost always advance with the same arguments, it is therefore more than probable that the polemical work against Jacob contains much that Jefet also adduced against

German translation: Bacher, *Die jüd. Bibelexegese*, &c. (Treves, 1892), p. 13 seq.

¹ The heading here reads: ואלה החשובות שהשיב החכם השלם הרב רבנו יפת. הלוי המלמד הגדול בן רב עלי הלוי נ"ע ליעקב בן שמואל העקש. See corrections thereto in Geiger, *אוצר נחמד*, IV, 19 seq.

² See *Kaufmann-Gedenkbuch*, p. 169 seq. On Jefet's controversial work, *ibid.*, p. 180 (reprint, p. xii). It is, at any rate, remarkable that the name of Jacob, as far as hitherto known, does not occur even in Jefet's commentaries.

Saadiyah. One would therefore be justified in briefly analysing this polemical work, more especially as Saadiyah also is expressly mentioned here, in the second poem : צמדת למלמדך סעדיה הנופי (i.e. from נף in Egypt) אשר דבריו מלאים דופי, והם חושבים שהם כליל יופי . . . רבך סעדיה בא מיפיפה אל (i.e. out of Egypt, cf. Jer. xli. 20) ארץ דשא אכזריה, להמעות שוגים ולחבל סמדרי פוריה, כזאת עשה בן צר[י]עה.

This polemical work consists of three sections in doggerel verses of four members, in which, after the manner of the Arabic Muwashshah songs, three members of each strophe rhyme with one another, whilst the fourth members have one common rhyme. The acrostic in all three is alphabetical¹. That they all three belong together may be inferred from the superscription of the third : אשלש אל"ף ב"ת. Possibly these were originally followed by replies in prose. Their contents are as follows :—

In the first section Jefet combats the view that there exists an Oral Law revealed by God to Moses, and employs the following four proofs : (1) Moses commands Joshua (Deut. xxxi. 11 ?) in the presence of all Israel to read the Torah ; there is no mention of an Oral Law. (2) To all questions that the son should put to his father, the Torah gives (Exod. xiii. 8, 14 &c.) such answers as can be derived from itself, but not out of any Oral Law existing beside it. (3) Moses, in his last exhortation (Deut. xxxii. 7), enjoins that questions should be asked of the ancestors, the answers to which are contained in the same address : so that here also there is no need of an oral supplement. (4) God promised the scattered members of his people he would turn to them again when they would abandon the work of man (cf. Isa. xxix. 13), among which are to be understood Mishna, Talmud, and Agada, which men invented².

¹ The fourth, with the acrostic מקצת הדברים חזק, belongs, as Geiger, l. c., rightly recognizes, to Sahl's polemical work.

² To be sure, we cannot regard this point as an argument against tradition. In the last strophe the first two members must be reversed : רופשי חורר

In section II the same theme is treated, and two proofs of Jacob b. Samuel for the authenticity of the Oral Law are refuted. From Jer. xvii. 21, 22 Jacob seems to have urged that the Pentateuchal laws need a supplementary Oral Law, because it does not follow from the Torah that one may not carry a burden on the Sabbath, as the prophet here insists. Jefet replies that this prohibition is to be derived from Num. iv. 13, because here the carrying of a burden is called work (לעשות מלאכה); and the sons of Kehat had only parts of the tabernacle to carry). The second proof, which Jacob repeated after Saadiah, was that from 1 Chron. xxiv. 19. Here the words כאשר צוהו, which refer to the twenty-four priestly divisions, must necessarily refer to the command of an Oral Law, as there is nothing of it contained in the Written Law. Whereupon Jefet again replies, that כאשר צוהו particularly refers to the service of the priests (hence to Num. xviii. 7); but the twenty-four divisions were indeed first introduced by David¹.

In section III various ordinances and institutions are discussed: on the one hand, it is shown that the data of Scripture for these completely suffice, contrary to the view of the Rabbis; and on the other hand again, that a part of them are not of biblical origin, as the Rabbis maintain, and hence they cannot have any validity whatsoever. For example, the Priestly Blessing² is expressly enjoined in the Torah (Num. vi. 23); but its details, as in many similar commandments, are to be derived by means of the thirteen

ה' הכתובת, המיד הונים נה בחשק ובאהבה, המורה וחלופה (i.e. the Oral Law) ישימו (1 Sam. xii. 21) להורעבה, מלים לא יועילו ולא יצילו כי זהו המה.

¹ Saadiah can only have asserted that the priests were already grouped into divisions in the time of Moses, but not into twenty-four, for this number is ascribed to David in the Talmud also (Ta'anit Babli, 27a; "Tosefta," IV, 2, ed. Zuckermann, p. 219). Cf. also *Commentary on Chronicles*, ed. Kirchheim, p. 36 seq.; Hai's "Responsum" in קהלת שלמה, ed. Wertheimer, no. 20, as well as Maimonides and Nahmanides, "Precepts," no. 26. See also Zunz, *Literaturg. d. syn. Poesie*, p. 206.

² This and the following points must, therefore, have been advanced by Jacob as arguments for the necessity of an Oral Law.

Rules of Interpretation (which, as is known, the Karaites also accepted)¹. The libation at sacrifices is biblical, but the water-libation is a capricious addition to the words of God (for 2 Sam. xxiii. 16, e. g. has nothing to do with sacrifices), and hence to be avoided. Again, the singing of the Levites belongs to the nature of their service, and had no need to be enjoined; and if at the offering of firstborns a hymn of thanksgiving was sung, a similar hymn with instruments must have accompanied sacrifices.—In Ezra x. 3 the Rabbis refer כהם to the children, that is to say, these were also expelled from Judaism. But this is revolting; the word rather refers only to the mothers².—The different שעוים were devised by the Talmudists, and it was particularly the Rabbis rather than the Karaites (however the latter can determine without an Oral Law what kinds of work are permitted on the Sabbath and what forbidden), who had to ask themselves how it came about that in this law, which claims to be of Divine origin, there should be so many differences of opinion. This last reproach is notably repeated by all Karaite controversialists.

13. Sahl b. Maṣliāḥ ha-Kohen (Abu 'l-Surri) is one of the most prominent, but also of the most fanatical Karaites of the older period³. He is generally considered very

¹ The thirteen Rules are also used by 'Anān and the earliest Karaites, see *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 208. Cf. also Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, VIII, 1, p. xi.

² Cf. Pinsker, p. 23, n. 12, and Geiger, l. c., 21.

³ For the literature on him see Steinschneider, *Cat. Lugd.*, p. 294; *Die hebr. Übers.*, p. 964, n. 306; and *Z. f. H. B.*, VI, 184. The short article on Sahl in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, s. v. (X, 636; by Ochser), is written without any special knowledge of the subject and is not without a comic touch, for Sahl is said to have been one of the Rechabites! The Maṣliāḥ ha-Kohen (Alphab. 47 י), or Maṣliāḥ Abu 'l-Sarri (Alphab. 62 י) quoted twice by Hadassi, was perhaps the son of Sahl also cited by the author of the *Hilluk* (cf. Pinsker, p. 106, l. 10; Pinsker, p. 87, n. 2, considers him to be the father of Sahl). On the other hand, the Maṣliāḥ b. Sahl ha-Kohen and Sahl b. Ṣalāḥ (see *J. Q. R.*, XVII, 632), mentioned in a Pentateuch Codex of the Karaite Synagogue, might have been descendants of our Sahl b. Maṣliāḥ. These two are brought into connexion with the Massorete, Michael b. Uzziel, who probably lived in the twelfth century (see Steinschneider, *Arab. Liter. d. Juden*, § 167).

much older than Jefet, but the fact was overlooked that in the oft-mentioned list of Saadiah's disputants he also mentions Abū Ali Ḥasan al-Baṣri, i. e. Jefet. On the other hand, Aaron b. Joseph, in his commentary on Lev. xv. 25, expressly states that Jefet combats a view of Sahl (fol. 25 a: . . . ודעת הכהן רבינו סהל ידועה שאם תהיה בסוף יום השביעי טהורה ותטבול ואחר שטבלה ראתה דם בתחלת יום השמיני היא נדה ולא זבה . . . ודעת הלוי ז"ל להפך וטען לכהן במאמר על נדתה שלא יצא משלשה ודברים וכו'), which indeed occurs in the commentary of the former, although anonymous (see Munk, *Notice sur Abou 'l-Walid*, p. 6, n. 2). In any case, such anonymous citations are no convincing proofs, for the view represented by Sahl could be that of a much older Karaite exegete¹. But another circumstance must be considered. In his polemical work (soon to be mentioned) against Jacob b. Samuel, Sahl speaks of letters and various questions which this Jacob addressed to him (see Pinsker, p. 26: עור כתבת אלי ואחה עתה אם למען בקש חכמה ובינה שאלה : p. 36: באגרת שלך השאלות ממני טוב עשית . . . ואם למען תואנה שאלה לא טוב עשית &c.), and as Jacob was a pupil of Saadiah², Sahl can have written his work at the latest *circa* 960. He was thus most probably a contemporary of Jefet, of the same age³, and wrote about 960–1000. In agreement with this are the statements of Ibn al-Hiti that Sahl in his commentary on Leviticus controverted Joseph b. Noah, and that he was probably his contemporary, and further, that Levi b. Jefet controverted Sahl in his law-book⁴. Joseph b.

¹ Thus Munk concluded (l. c., p. 12), on the ground of such anonymous quotations, that Jefet is later than Jeshua b. Jehuda.

² See above, p. 235.

³ In Karaite literature now Sahl, now Jefet is put forward. See, e. g., Hadassi, 178 כ and מ, 213 ל and ט, 236 ז (where ודלוי ודלוי), 241 ז, 257 ז, 258 ז; Aaron b. Joseph on Num., f. 29 b; Aaron b. Elias, בן עזן, f. 52 d, 167 c, 168 b, 170 a, and כתר חוריה on Num., f. 45 b, &c. The name of Sahl does not seem to have yet been found in Jefet.

⁴ *J. Q. R.*, IX, 433, l. 2: . . . ואלאקרב אנה (אי אבו אלסרי) כהן מעצור אלשיך אבו : 2 : . . . יעקב יוסף בן נח לאנה נאקצה פי אלאביב מנאקצה מוילדה אלך . . . וכהן : 12 : . . . (אי אלמעלם אבו סעיד בן אלמעלם אבו אלסרי לאנה (עלי ולאנה (ms.

Noah died (according to Ibn al-Hiti) in 393 of the Hegira (= 1002-3), and Levi wrote at the beginning of the eleventh century¹. That Sahl speaks of the period of Saadiah as of that of his predecessors, agrees with these facts (see Pinsker, p. 36: (ולפני מזה בימי הפיתוחי).

Sahl also composed a special controversial work against Saadiah, which he mentions in the same list, and which is likewise lost. But he must have disputed violently with the Gaon in his other works also, of which two, both in Arabic, deserve particular consideration. In the first place, there is a commentary on the Pentateuch, of which a fragment on Deuteronomy is said to exist in a MS. in St. Petersburg (*Z. A. T. W.*, I, 157). The part on Deuteronomy was also used in an anonymous Karaite compilation of the year 1351 (MS. Brit. Mus. Or. 2498, Cat. Margol., I, no. 334, cf. also below No. 38). But another MS. fragment on Exodus, at St. Petersburg, is said to belong perhaps also to Sahl, and here there are two passages against Saadiah. In the one (communicated by Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, V, 225) Saadiah's contention, that 'Anân taught that the new month should be fixed by observation of the moon only in order that the Mahommedans (whose custom was the same) should appoint him head of the Jews, is rebutted with great indignation. The reproach is levelled against himself, that in his attempt to succeed to the leadership he relied upon the Mahommedans and desecrated the Sabbath, and that during the strife with David b. Zakkai, his opponents turned to every community with a ban against the man who wanted to attain office in such a manner. In another passage (communicated by the same in his edition of Qirqisâni, p. 254, n. 4, and *Otcherki*, I, 11, n. 3) Saadiah's assumption, that the

can only refer to Abu Said, i.e. to Levi; see Steinschneider, *Z. f. H. B.*, l.c.]; *ibid.*, l. 19: פי בניסח אלקראיין ברמשק ראו (ראה I.) גזו מן הפסיר ספר ויקרא רקא וכן זמלה: מא קאל אימצלם אבו אלסיר פי מנאקצחה לבן נח לה. ר. סנה פי אלקדם אלשרף אלך.

¹ See my *Zür jüd.-arab. Litter.*, p. 6.

calculation of the calendar was first introduced in consequence of the advent of Sadok and Boethos, is disputed. But I have already expressed the conjecture that the author of this fragment is perhaps Ḥasan b. Mashiah (see p. 224).

A second important work of Sahl was a ספר המצות in Arabic (of which there are fragments in St. Petersburg), with a Hebrew introduction (edited by Harkavy in מאסף נדחים, I, no. 13 = המליץ, 1879, cols. 639-43), which contains much valuable information about the Jews in Jerusalem in the time of the author (see *R. É. J.*, XLVIII, 154), and is also otherwise very interesting. According to Steinschneider (*Z. f. H. B.*, VI, 185), this work is perhaps identical with the ספר דינים of Sahl cited by Samuel al-Magribi (Pinsker, p. 144). But it is more probable that Sahl treated ritual and civil law matters in two works, like Benjamin al-Nahawendi before him, of whose ספר המצות some fragments have recently become known (collected by Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, VIII, 1, pp. 175-84), and whose ספר דינים on Civil Law is printed under the title (probably invented later) of משאת בנימן. In his law-book also, as a matter of course, Sahl disputed with Saadiah, and perhaps this book is the origin of a passage (communicated by Harkavy in Saadiah's *Œuvres*, IX, p. xlii) in which the Fayumite is reproached with not recognizing analogy as a legal noun, contrary to the Thirteen Rules instituted by the Talmudists: ויקול (אי אלפיומי) אן סדר עולם אלדי פיה קאל: רבי יוסי בעשרים ובחמשה באלול נברא העולם הזה אגדה ואין סומכין על דברי אגדה אלך.¹ ואסקט אלקיאם פי אלשרע ותרך מא קאלוה פי צדר תורת כהנים מן שלש עשרה מדות התורה נדרשת ולפסטה נדרשת פהי

¹ That Saadiah did not hold the Agada as a standard authority follows also from the above-mentioned fragment of his polemical work against Ibn Sāqawaihi (No. 2), where he reproaches the latter with having derived arguments for his assertions not from Mishna, Mekhilta, and Targum, but from Agadot, from unauthenticated writings, and from Piyutim (*J. Q. R.*, XIII, 664: ולא יסחשד עלי קולה בשי ממה פי אלמשנה ולא: אלמנאלאת ולא אלהרגום ואנמא אתי בה שעב בעצדה מן אלמגאדאת ובעצדה מן כתב לא (שהאדה עליה ובעצדה מן אלהואנה אלך). It is also interesting to establish the fact that the expression ויאין סומכין על דברי אגדה, which also occurs in Sherira

תרל עלי אלאסתכראג ואלקיאם לאנהם לם יקולו נמצאת פכאן יקול קאיל
 1. אנהא מונודה פי אלנקל.

Moreover, according to a conjecture of Harkavy, Sahl is perhaps the author of an Arabic lampoon against Saadiah, in which is included a similar Hebrew lampoon of one of Saadiah's most ardent opponents, namely, of the Gaon Aaron (or Khalaf, cf. *R. É. J.*, XLIX, 300) ibn Sarjâdo, as well as the libellous document of the deposition of David b. Zakkai (edited as far as extant, and completely discussed last, by Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, V, 222 seq.). In any case Sahl's authorship is very doubtful, for in the first place the previously mentioned fragment on Exodus, which offers some parallels to this lampoon, originates rather from Ben Mashiah than from Sahl; and in the second place, Harkavy himself admits that everything seems to point to the Karaite author of this work having been a contemporary of Saadiah, and having lived in Irâq. But we know that Sahl probably wrote in the last third of the tenth century, and that he sojourned in Jerusalem². Besides, as this work is purely personal, and does not touch on any legal or other points of difference between Rabbanites and Karaites, it does not exactly fall within the scope of this dissertation, and it is only mentioned here incidentally.

Sahl, like Jefet, composed a polemical work, not only

(see *Eshkol*, ed. Auerbach, II, 47) and Hai (*Responsa*, ed. Lyck, no. 98), is already found in Saadiah, and was perhaps coined by him.

¹ Harkavy wavers between Sahl and Jeshua b. Jehuda, but the authorship of the first should be more probable: see his polemical work (soon to be mentioned) against Jacob b. Samuel (in Pinsker, p. 26): הוי ס[ו]ררי דבריהם ולא ידעו בושת האומרים יש תורה בפה עם חמשת וזלא כתוב בחורה כהנים שלהם מפורשת משלש עשרה מרות החורה נררשת. [It may be remarked, by the way, that the passage cited in *Oeuvres*, l. c., from a commentary on Exodus, is actually derived from Jefet's commentary, on xxi. 33; see above, p. 231, n. 1.]

² This follows not only from the preface to the המצות mentioned above, but also from many passages of the polemical work against Jacob b. Samuel; see, e.g., Pinsker, p. 27 below: בני ליהודי את בני אמי מבית המקדש באמי ליהודי את בני אמי, and so forth (בית המקדש here in the sense of the Arabic بیت المقدس, i. e. Jerusalem).

in which it is particularly and emphatically shown that the Oral Law cannot be of divine origin, as the teachers of the Mishna themselves were of divided opinion on many questions. Probably to this poem was attached an epistle, the beginning of which is missing¹, and in which grammatical and even orthographical errors of Jacob are pointed out, Sahl remarking that he found nearly sixty such errors in the letters of his opponent (p. 72: ועד הנה קרוב לששים שגגות מצאתי באגרותיך). But as a matter of fact, the errors branded by Sahl (where, e. g. כסירי, &c., are written *plene*) are not errors at all, for this mode of writing was usual in the time of the Geonim in order to facilitate the reading of words without vowels.

The actual controversy begins with the words (p. 27): אני מבית המקדש באתי להזהיר את בני עמי, and is addressed to Jacob b. Samuel; but it is really directed principally against the Rabbanites, as it is more in the nature of an admonitory and missionary pamphlet, in which Sahl appeals incessantly to the followers of the Talmud to abandon their former conduct and to walk in the only right way, the way of the Karaites: "Have mercy, O Israelites," he exclaims in one passage (p. 34), "upon your souls and your children! Behold, the light is burning, and the sun shines forth (i. e. Karaism). Choose for yourselves the good path, where there is living water, and walk

hand, in the poem as well as in the epistle and in the actual polemical work, one and the same phrase of Jacob b. Samuel, in which the word *חורר* occurs, is alluded to: see p. 24, l. 4 from bottom; p. 27, l. 16, and p. 30, l. 14 from bottom. By *חוררים* Sahl understands his rather strict coreligionists, see p. 36, l. 17: עתה אזהירו ואזהרו עם כרעיהו כי לקולו אזהרו חוררים: (cf. also p. 26, l. 1: . . . כי הוא אזהירו ואזהרו עם כרעיהו כי לקולו אזהרו חוררים).

¹ This follows from the opening words (p. 27, l. 16): עד כתבה אלי באגרה: שך. The piece, p. 25, l. 26—p. 26, l. 5, seems to be the continuation of p. 27, l. 3 from bottom (if the words of Elias Jerushalmi, p. 25, l. 24, refer to it: (ומפני שיש לו ז"ל השגות כרובות לפני ואח האגרה כתב הנה בזה הלשון); and here also the conclusion shows that this epistle forms an independent whole. According to Elias (p. 25, l. 12), Sahl is said to have written besides this epistle ten further replies (i. e. letters most likely) to Jacob. But is this based on reality?

not in a waste and waterless land (i. e. Talmudism)," &c. "Brethren!" he exclaims in another passage (p. 43), "hearken not unto those who say that the Karaites (בְּנֵי מִקְרָא) wish you evil. God forbid! Verily we pray unto God, that he should have mercy upon his people, the remnant of Israel, and be mindful of the love for our forefathers. We write all this only out of love for you: circumcise the foreskin of your heart, for the time has come to awake from the sleep of the exile." In a similar strain he goes on reproving the Rabbanites repeatedly for their numerous sins, and accuses them of transgressing many prescriptions of the law respecting diet, purity, marriage, and the Sabbath (pp. 28-30, 32)¹, of being devoted to superstition (p. 32)², &c. And if many of the Rabbanites of Palestine have entered upon a better course, that is due to the influence of the Karaites (p. 33); whose ascetic mode of life Sahl describes in eloquent words (p. 31). The allegorical allusions of many verses are also interesting, as, e. g. Canticles i. 8 (p. 34); and iii. 7 (p. 36; cf. Geiger, l. c., p. 24); Zech. xi. 12 (ibid.) and 14 (p. 42). In the last verse he makes the staff נֵזֶם symbolize the empire of the heathen nations, which is styled "grace," because these nations have not destroyed the religion of Israel; by the staff חֲבָלִים is meant the yoke of the two women (Zech. v. 9), i. e. of the two *Jeshiboth* in Sura and Pumbaditha, which by means of Talmud and Agada "have

¹ They are mostly such prescriptions in which the Karaites differ from the Rabbanites, and are inclined to the severer view; thus, with regard to the enjoyment of an embryo (קָבוֹשׁ אוֹ שָׁלִיל) and of the fat tail (אֵלֶּיָּהּ), the adoption of a minimum (שְׁעוּרִים) in the mixing of clean and unclean food, the marrying of a step-sister (בַּת אִשְׁתּוֹ אָב) and a childless sister-in-law (יִבְמָה), &c. Almost all Karaites, from Qirqisāni and Salmon to Firkowitsch, are not tired of repeating these complaints.

² This passage is of especial interest for the history of culture: ואֵין . . . אַחֲרֵי שֶׁדָּרְכֵי עֲבוּרֵי עֲבוּדָה וְרָה בֵּין מִקְצֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹשְׁבִים בְּקִבְרִים וְלֵינִים בְּנִצּוּרִים וְדוּרֻשִׁים אֶל הַמָּתוּם וְאוֹמְרִים ר' יוֹסֵי הַגִּלְגִּילִי רִפְאֵנִי הַבְּשִׁיעִי וּמִדְּלִיקִים הַנּוֹרֹת עַל קִבְרֵי הַצְדִּיקִים וּמִקְשָׁרִים לַפְּנִימָה עַל הַלְבָנִים וְקוֹשְׁרִים עֲקָרִים עַל הַחֲמֹר שֶׁל הַצִּדִּיק לֹכֵל מִיְּנֵי הָלֶאֱמָה וְחוֹגְגִים (partly repeated in Hadassi, *Alphab.* 104; cf. also Bacher, *Agada d. Tann.*, I², 354, n. 5).

destroyed the vineyard of the Lord" (מחבלים כרם ה' צבאות). This staff will now be broken, i. e. the traditional writings will be given over to destruction, and thus their declaration (אחיה in the sense of אהיה, Job xv. 17!) will be suppressed¹.

As can be seen, there is hardly anything of a personal controversy here with Jacob b. Samuel, but the attack is all the more violent against his teacher, Saadiah, whose name is accompanied by abusive epithets (p. 40: הור הרשע האיש הרע התועה והמתעה המסית ומדיה את עם [ישראל] מדרך הטוב (סעדיה הפיתומי העקש הפותי [הפיתומי] ואת הישרה עקש). Besides the passage already quoted in this dissertation, where Sahl relates that Saadiah avoided disputing with Karaites, and did not publish his anti-Karaite writings during his lifetime, whereupon there follows a list of the Karaite controversialists (Pinsker, p. 37); it is also related of the Fayumite that in consequence of his persuasive arts² a dispute about the festivals broke out between the Palestineans and the Babylonians, so that they observed the festivals on different days, and hurled the ban against one another. I have shown (*J. Q. R.*, X, 154) that what is meant here is Saadiah's campaign against Ben Meir, in the year 921, which is now pretty well explained, and that Sahl's statements rest upon facts throughout.

Much more detailed is a complete excursus in which Saadiah's well-known theory of the great age of the calculation of the calendar is refuted (Pinsker, p. 37, l. 7 from bottom—p. 42, l. 25)³. Only one of the Gaon's

¹ Jefet interprets this word similarly in Cant. iii. 2 (ed. Bargès, p. 41), although he gives a different allegorical explanation to the entire verse. In his MS. commentary, ad loc., he refers to the vision of the two women to the Talmudic colleges of both countries, Palestine and Babylon (באשרא . . . ואמא שחם נשים פהי אלהיבתי. אלהי אלהיבתי. באלשם ואלאנרי באשרא) . . . ואמא שחם נשים והם רוסא אלהיבתי אלקאלין באלמשנה ואלחמוד אלהי : further (רפצדא פי אלשוואק אלהי). Cf. also Hadassi, f. 10a infra (letters ש and ח).

² Pinsker, p. 28: לפני מזה בימי העירומי אשר פחה אנשים, a play on words.

³ This excursus is not free from errors and repetitions, which cannot well be removed here. Whether Saadiah is meant by the מרעה (p. 28, l. 14), as Geiger (l. c., p. 23) presumes, is uncertain.

proofs is there combated, namely, that from 1 Chron. xii. 33: ומבני יששכר יודעי בינה לעתים לדעת מה יעשה ישראל. The sons of Issachar had, according to Gaon, understanding of the times (i. e. of the principles of the calendar), and let Israel know when they should "make," i. e. observe, the festivals. The verb עשה is also used of the observance of festivals, see Deut. xvi. 1, 10, 13. Sahl replies, not without humour, that the sons of Issachar fixed only the time of the paschal offering (for Deut. xvi. 1 refers only to this), of Pentecost, and of Tabernacles, but not that of the remaining festivals, in connexion with which that verb is not used. On the other hand, they must have taught the order of the festival offerings, the recurrence of the Sabbath, &c., because here תעשו (Num. xxix. 39) and לעשות (Deut. v. 15) are used respectively. In the same way the counsellors of Ahasuerus must have calculated the calendar, because they are called יודעי העתים (Esther i. 13). Finally, Saadiah contradicts himself, as he elsewhere maintains that the fixing of the calendar lay in the hands of the Sanhedrim, and he contradicts the Talmud, which speaks of torches used as signals on the determination of the new month, and of witnesses who were questioned about the new moon, and who, on that account, might desecrate the Sabbath (see Mishna, *Rosh ha-Shanah*, II)¹. Indeed, Sahl continues, the command for the observation of the calendar follows from Gen. i. 14, Ps. lxxxix. 38 and civ. 19, and calculation is

¹ These objections are repeated, partly in the same words, by Jefet and his son Levi, then by Jeshua b. Jehuda and Aaron b. Elias, see above, p. 231. The words of the last but one (MS. Leyden, 41², f. 89 b) are as follows: ומהם אמר ומבני יששכר יודעי בינה לעתים אשר החפץ בו הבינה דעת החשבון ואמר ולעתים החפץ בהם עתות המועדים אמר וכל אחיהם על פיהם יורה על היות ישראל כלם שבים אליהם בזה השער וסם זה מושחת מאופנים הא' כי הסמיכה על דבר איש באין ראיה רע והוא אלהקיד (cf. *R. É. J.*, XLIV, 183, n. 4) וזה לא יורה [f. 90 a] על אשר אמרו אבל הקרוב בו היות אלה יודעי בינה לעתות המלחמה והג' כי אם היה ישוב אל החשבון השוב קשיב אותו אל הכהנים אשר הם טוב יותר מבני יששכר והד' כי היה כבר אמר בגלל חירם (2 Chr. ii. 12) יודע בינה לחורם אבי ואם היה אמר פה יודעי בינה לעתים יגוש אשר אמר אותו כן יתחייב [גם כן] זה והוא אליל (i. e. null) וזה' כי מצאנו אותו ויאמר המלך להכמים יודעי העתים (Esther i. 13) ואין החפץ בו כמו אשר אמר ויש שם אופנים הרבה להשחית אלה הראיות כלם ואולם קצתתי אותם.

strictly forbidden according to Deut. xviii. 10¹. Sahl also does not miss the opportunity of dealing a blow at the Talmud. He says that Saadiah's strange interpretation of the verse in question is not to be wondered at, as he only follows his teachers (i. e. the Talmudists), who have made assertions that are not less comical, e. g. when they deduce the commandment about Kiddush on Sabbath and festivals from Exod. xx. 8², or when they order the trumpet to be blown to confound Satan (see *Rosh ha-Shanah*, 16 b supra), &c. Finally, in support of the statement that the Talmudists also speak of an observation of the moon, Sahl (p. 41, l. 19 seq.) quotes a story that is said to be derived from the Talmud, but which has quite the character of the biblical stories of the Koran. Here also are truth and fiction interwoven, and the most diverse passages of the Talmud are welded together³. But it is not impossible that Sahl had

¹ That is to say, the calculation of the calendar system is to be regarded as sorcery and astrology. This strange assertion is first found in Daniel al-Qumisi (9th cent.), and must have been advanced already by 'Anān, see Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, VIII, 1, 189: פי ספר מצותו נ"ע איז אסאך מצינו אסור לנו לדרוש ולהשווה את השבועות הקוסמים ככתוב לא ימצא בך מעביר בנו ובתו באש קוסם קסמים וגו'. ואין מותר לנו לדרוש חדשי יי ומעורר בחשבון הקוסמים והדברי שמים וכו'.

² P. 40, l. 26: . . . ואל יפלא בעיניכם פתגמנותיו כי התלמיד ילך בדרך רביו ומעשה: אבות יעשו בניו וכן אמרו בפתרון זכור את יום השבת לקדשו תנו רבנן את יום השבת לקדשו וזכרוהו על היין בכניסתו (על היין) מכאן סמכו חכמים על קדוש (לקדוש) היום מן התורה. ואין לי אלא שבת וזוג המצות מנין ת"ל למען תזכור את יום צאתך ממצרים. חג השבועות מנין ת"ל וזכרת כי עבר היית במצרים [ושמרת ועשית]. חג המצות מנין [ת"ל] וזכרת כי עבר היית במצרים [בארץ מצרים ויפוך ה' אלהיך]. ומגן דבוח הסכות קאים דכתבי מעיל אליה (דיליה) הענק תעניק לו וגו' וסמך ליה חג הסכות העשה לך שבעת ימים. ואע"ג דמדבר (דמדבר) בקירושא צריך לאדכורי בצלוחת ובברכת המזון מ"ש זכור וזכרת בו ב' פעמים פסוקים כתובים ואתו מועדות וילכו (וילפינן) משבת לשבת (מה שבת) בהללה ועל הכוס אף (על פי) יום בהפלה ועל הכוס וכו' This Boraitha agrees neither with the passage in the Mekhilta, ad loc., nor with *Pesachim*, 106a, but is taken from the *Halachot Gedolot*, beginning of הדללה קדוש והדללה cf. also דורו, II, no. 25.

³ Cf. e. g. *Rosh ha-Shana*, 25a, *Menahot*, 29a, *Shevuot*, 31a, *Berachot*, 63b, &c. In consequence of the conflict that broke out between Gamliel II and Joshua b. Hanania, the former, in conjunction with Akiba and Tarfon, is said to have introduced the nineteen-year cycle, and to have abolished the observation of the moon: (ר"ל רבן גמליאל ור' עקיבא ור' תרפון): . . .

before him some apocryphal *Boraitoth*. Hadassi, who adopted the same story, with a few unimportant deviations (*Eshkol*, Alfab., 1927-1941), probably drew from Sahl.

14. An anonymous Karaite author, whose work (in Arabic) is partly extant in a St. Petersburg MS., and who (among other things) controverted a passage from Saadiah's Arabic commentary on the ספר הגל' (edited by Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mitt.*, V, 195), must likewise belong to the tenth century. Evidence of his antiquity is afforded by the fact that he quotes nobody but 'Anân, Benjamin al-Nahawendi, and Saadiah. This Karaite quotes from the work of Saadiah just mentioned, that the compilation of the Mishna began forty years after the restoration of the second Temple and was closed 130 years after its destruction, thus amounting (as the second Temple stood 420 years, according to tradition) to 510 years¹; secondly, that there were eleven generations of Mishna-doctors (see *ib.* 196, n. 11); and thirdly, that the latter generation fixed the Mishna in writing because they feared, in consequence of the cessation of prophecy and the increasing dispersion, that the tradition might fall into oblivion. The anonymous Karaite replies (see *ib.* 196, n. 13), that if the Mishna rests on true tradition, why was such a long period necessary for its compilation, whence the many differences of opinion, &c. They are the usual objections that all the older Karaites advance in their controversy upon these points: e.g. Qirgisâni, section ii, chap. 13 seq.²; Salmon b. Jeroḥam (cf. *J. Q. R.*, VIII,

והשבו חשבון לבנה ועשו מחזור ג' כ"ט כ"ג (גד"ח אר"ש = ג' בגג"ב ב"ג i.e. ג' ב"ש ב"ג 1). כרי שיעשו ו' עבורין בי"ש שנים ובסלו את הראייה וכו'.

¹ In the original it reads: אן אלמא אבהרו בהררין אלמשה מן ארבעין סנה . . . זלה מן בנא אלביא אלהאני ועלי מאיה ולמסין סנה בעד זראב אלביא וולך זמס מאיה ועשר סנין. These numbers do not agree with one another (for $420 - 40 + 150 = 530$), and Harkavy (p. 195, n. 6) therefore emends ועשר into מאיה ועשר, but it must be corrected reversely into מאיה ולמסין. The last date is given by Saadiah himself in his polemical work against Ibn Sâqaweihi (*J. Q. R.*, XVI, 108, l. 4 from bottom): ואלי אכר וקת אלהא: אלמשה וולך בעדזראב אלביא אלהאני קל סנה.

² Only a part of chaps. 14 and 15 (see above, p. 218) is preserved, where in chap. 14 Saadiah's arguments for the authenticity of the Oral Law are

687 seq.); Jefet b. 'Ali on Exod. xxi. 33 (see ib. n. 6, and above, p. 235), &c. It may here be observed that both, Qirqisāni and Jefet, make verbal quotations from Saadiah on the questions dealt with here, and it is therefore possible that both used the Arabic commentary on the ספר הגלוי.

SAMUEL POZNAŃSKI.

advanced, and in chap. 15 they are refuted (partly edited in *Z. f. H. B.*, III, 175, 176). Yet Qirqisāni says here expressly that he will deal with this theme again in further chapters, and that he has already dealt with it in chap. 13 (MS. Brit. Mus. Or. 2580, f. 49 a): **והוא מא מא אברה (אי אפימי) בה :** מן כיפה אנקל וקולה באן אלהוראה כתבת פי סנה אלהרבעין ומא אחבעה מן אלכלאם . . . וסנשרחה פימא בעד . ואמא מא ארעאה מן אן אלעלמא עמדו אלי אלעלם אלהקלירי פר'ונה וס'לה משה: ובקו פרוגה ואן אלהלאמיר ד'נו מא בקי מן אלפרוע וס'לו זלך תלמוד פקר הק'ם אפסארנא לזלך פי אלבאב אלהלת עשר ובי'נא זלך מן ונה ערה וליסת בנא האנה אלי ש'ארתהא אלך.

(In a second Article, this account of the Karaite-Saadiah controversies will be brought down to the nineteenth century.)